WOMEN AND HEALTH (CH-104)
Syllabus Fall 2018

Instructor: Michelle Stransky, Ph.D.
E-mail: michelle.stransky@tufts.edu
Office Hours: Tuesday/Thursday 4:30-5:30 in 574 Boston Ave., Suite 208 or by appointment

Class Schedule: Wednesday 9-11:30a Sci-Tech Ctr, Room 135

Course Description
This course examines women and facets of women’s health through an interdisciplinary perspective. We set the stage for the rest of the semester by first discussing the need to examine women’s health and describing the women’s movement. Then, we assess the biological and social facets of women’s reproductive development and health and the controversies that surround reproduction. Next, we delve into the non-reproductive health of women, exploring what and how we know about women’s health and the influence of culture on perceptions of health and survivorship. We end this portion of the course by discussing women’s access to health care, given the current political situation. Finally, we delve into work-family balance and violence in an effort to understand some additional facets of women’s health. We end the semester by discussing the emerging research on LGBTQ health. Throughout the course, special attention is given to populations of minority women, including women who are racial/ethnic minorities and women with disabilities.

Course Objectives
At the conclusion of the class, students will be able to:
1. Describe the importance of examining health among women and sex/gender minority groups
2. Discuss the implications of the women’s movement for the study of women’s health
3. Explain health disparities and differences that exist among women based on race, disability, etc.
4. Describe the implications of federal health and research policies on women’s health.
5. Discuss a variety of facets of women’s health, including puberty and menopause, mental health, chronic illnesses, and violence.
6. Assess the quality of information so that students are able to participate critically evaluate health care and policy proposals for women’s health.

Required Course Materials
All required readings and materials are on Canvas. Additional readings may be assigned during the semester (i.e. may not appear on the course schedule) and should be read before coming to class.

Course Policies
Office Hours: You may attend office hours as many times as you like; feel free to come as a group, with a friend, or by yourself to ask questions about the class. I recommend emailing ahead of time to make an appointment during office hours because they are often busy, but this is not required. I am also available to meet outside of office hours via phone or WebEx; please email me to set up an appointment.

Grading Questions: Please review your grades early and often. If you have any questions about grading policies or would like to discuss a grade with me, please wait until 24 hours have passed between receiving the grade and asking questions about it. If you do have questions about a grade, please email me with your question within two weeks of the grade’s posting.

Late Work: In general, I accept late work with a grade penalty. A 5% letter-grade penalty will be applied for each day that an assignment is late. Assignments are considered late if they are submitted after 11:55p

1NOTE: This syllabus is not a contract. The instructor reserves the right to alter the course content or requirements based on new evidence, class discussions, or other pedagogical objectives.
on the day that they are due. In general, computer and printer problems and deadlines for other classes are not acceptable reasons for requesting a deadline extension. Save your work regularly, including copying it to somewhere other than your computer (ex. a flash drive, an external hard drive, Dropbox.com, etc.).

Classroom Etiquette: Health, health care, and gender are value-laden topics. This means that we must all be respectful of diverse opinions throughout our discussions. I do not tolerate rude, insensitive, demeaning, or offensive behavior or language. This does not mean that you cannot disagree with your classmates – in fact, I welcome that kind of discussion in order to clarify what you think you have learned. However, disagreement does not include name-calling or any other sort of remark that would potentially hurt (physically or psychically) another student. We must all be especially careful about sarcastic remarks.

To foster active and engaged learning, I also expect the following:

- Please do not use laptops, tablets, phones, or other types of technology during class. These tend to be distracting to other students and do not create a positive learning environment. Please let me know via email if this policy presents any type of hardship for you.
  - If you can, please do bring laptops, tablets, phones, or other types of technology to class. We may use those technologies to complete in-class activities.
- If you need to leave early, please let me know ahead of time and sit near the door so that you do not disturb your fellow students when you leave. Similarly, if you are late to class, please enter quietly and sit near the door.
- Please participate in discussion (but do not take it over). While I understand that people do not participate for a variety of reasons, please know that part of the learning process is through the discussion of ideas with others. You have important things to say and your way of understanding a concept may be especially helpful to another student. Alternately, please do not dominate the conversation. This is also not useful to class and can make others feel that their participation is not valued or fear that they will be ridiculed.

Submitting Assignments: All assignments must be submitted via Canvas and will be reviewed for plagiarism by Turnitin.com. Assignments must be submitted as Word or PDF per Turnitin.com’s requirements. Unless otherwise noted, assignments are due by 11:55p on the date they are due. However, with advanced notice, I may request that you submit certain assignments in paper form.

When you submit assignments, please use the following naming convention: YourLastNameYourFirstName_AssignmentName (for example, StranskyMichelle_CurrentEvents). Please do not email me assignments unless you have been directed to do so; I will not accept them. This is a safety practice for you and for me because we will have an online record that your assignment has been submitted and it will stay in Canvas.

Academic Integrity: Tufts holds its students strictly accountable for adherence to academic integrity. The consequences for violations can be severe. It is critical that you understand the requirements of ethical behavior and academic work as described in Tufts’ Academic Integrity Handbook. The Faculty of the School of Arts and Sciences and the School of Engineering are required to report suspected cases of academic integrity violations to the Dean of Student Affairs Office. If cheating or plagiarism (see details below on what constitutes plagiarism) is suspected, this must be reported to the Dean. More information is available at: https://students.tufts.edu/student-affairs/student-life-policies/academic-integrity-policy.

Plagiarism: Plagiarism is using someone else’s words, ideas, or phrases in your work and representing it as your own or not properly attributing the work. Please be aware that copying a phrase or sentence and listing a citation at the end without using quotation marks is plagiarism. Plagiarism is more fully discussed in the Academic Integrity Handbook, issued by the Dean of Students. For this course, you will
need to upload your work to Canvas, where it will be reviewed for plagiarism by Turnitin.com. If you plagiarize, you may get a zero on the assignment and you will be reported to the dean. Do not plagiarize. If you use a source, cite it. This applies to all information either directly quoted or paraphrased. If you copy words directly, they must be in quotation marks (“ ”).

Available Academic Supports: Tufts University has assistance available for students in need of academic help. The Academic Resource Center (https://students.tufts.edu/academic-advice-and-support/academic-resource-center) provides writing support and advice on avoiding plagiarism, among other supports, to ensure students’ successful undergraduate careers.

Students with Disabilities: If you require an accommodation as a result of a documented disability, please register with Student Accessibility Services Office at the beginning of the semester. If you have not already done so, call the Student Services Desk at 617-2000 to arrange an appointment with the Program Director of Disability Services. More information can be found at the Tufts University Student Accessibility Services website: https://students.tufts.edu/student-accessibility-services. Please also contact me early in the semester so that your learning needs may appropriately be met. All discussions will remain confidential.

Description of Course Activities and Requirements

Take-home Final Exam (Due December 12th, 30%): The Final Exam will be composed of short essay questions. All information covered in class and/or in assigned readings (that is not covered in class) is considered fair game for exam test questions. Additional details will be provided in the weeks leading up to the exam.

Health Policy Brief (Due October 3rd, 30%): Students will be required to write a health policy brief on the topic of their choice related to women and health. This brief is designed to address communication skills with the general public and allow students the opportunity to delve into an area of women’s health that is of specific interest to them. Details of the assignment, including its format and grading, are available on Canvas.

In-Class Debate (Debate Preparation Due October 30th, 15%; Post-Debate Summary Due November 5th, 15%): Students will participate in an in-class debate on the topic of women and health care accessibility. To facilitate the success of the debate, students are asked to prepare for the debate by outlining both sides of the argument. Following the debate, students are asked to critically assess the debate and what they’ve learned about making arguments in the field of public health. Details of the debate, its preparatory, and summarizing assignments, along with grading rubrics, are posted on Canvas to support your success.

Public Focus on Women and Health Reflection (Due November 28th; 5%): Students are asked to write a brief (2-page maximum) critical reflection on the women’s health issues in society. Details of this assignment are available online but please note, these papers are not a simple summary. You must attend a talk (on- or off-campus) on a topic related to women’s health (e.g., during the Spring of 2018, the former director of Planned Parenthood gave a talk on campus and the CH department co-sponsored a symposium on black maternal death) or interview someone who works in the field of women’s health. While they should include a brief summary, the bulk of the paper should include your own critical analysis of the talk, including, for example, the ways that some organizations do public health and whether or the type of large- and small-scale impacts that the organization has on the community. A rubric is provided to guide your efforts.

Attendance, Participation, and Engagement (5%): Although this course is not a seminar, we will frequently be working in groups or engaging in large-group discussion to address the course material. Class attendance and reading the assigned article(s) prior to class is vital to your successful participation.
and engagement in this work. Questions and critical challenges to the perspectives presented in the assigned reading are strongly encouraged. A rubric is provided to guide your efforts.

**Grading**

- Take-home Final Exam (Due December 12th) 30
- Health Policy Brief (Due October 3rd) 30
- In-Class Debate
  - Debate Preparation (Due October 30th) 15
  - Post-Debate Summary (Due November 5th) 15
- Public Focus on Women and Health Reflection (Due November 28th) 5
- Attendance, Participation, and Engagement 5
## COURSE SCHEDULE

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>WEEK</th>
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<th>CLASS TOPIC</th>
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| 1    | 9/5  | Course Overview; Syllabus Why Study Women and Health Women's Health Movement | • Krieger. (2003). Genders, Sexes, and Health: What are the Connections - and Why Does It Matter?  
• Fahs. (2016). Women's Health Movement in the United States  
| 2    | 9/12 | Women's Biological Development and Change through the Life Course | • Review: PBS Nova. How is Sex Determined? (Online Resource)  
• Merck Manuals. Female Reproductive Endocrinology; Female Internal Genital Organs; Female External Genital Organs; Puberty in Girls; Menstrual Cycle; Menopause  
• Kolata and Petersen. (2002). Hormone Replacement Study a Shock to the Medical System | |
| 3    | 9/19 | Women and Pregnancy | • Merck Manuals. Physiology of Pregnancy; Management of Normal Labor  
• Atrash et al. (2008). Where is the "W"oman in MCH? | |
| 4    | 9/26 | Controversies of About Women's Sexual Health | • Ricketts et al. (2014). Game Change in Colorado: Widespread Use of Long-Acting Reversible Contraceptives and Declines in Births  
• Listen to Tie My Tubes, Episode 1: A Double Slap in the Face (Online Resource)  
• Manninen. (2010). Rethinking Roe v. Wade: Defending the Abortion Right in the Face of Contemporary Opposition | |
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| 5    | 10/3 | Women, Illness, and Medication | • Women as Research Subjects  
• Gender and Symptomology  
• Watch: Merz. (2011). The Single Biggest Health Threat Women Face (Online Resource) | Health Policy Brief  
Due by 11:55p |
| 6    | 10/10| Women, Health, and Culture | • Sulik. Chapter 2: The Development of Pink Ribbon Culture  
• Learn about the 'Go Red for Women' Campaign (Online Resource)  
• Dusenbery. Chapter 4: Autoimmune Disease and the Long Search for a Diagnosis | |
| 7    | 10/17| Women and Behavioral Health | • Alexander and McMahon. (2010). Chapter 3: Mental Conditions in Adult Women: Epidemiology and Impact  
• Tuchman. (2010). Women and Addiction: The Importance of Gender Issues in Substance Abuse Research  
• Stone. (2015). Pregnant Women and Substance Use: Fear, Stigma, and Barriers to Care | |
| 8    | 10/24| Women and Health Care | • In-Class Debate  
• Robertson and Collins. (2011). Women at Risk: Why increasing numbers of women are failing to get the health care they need and how the Affordable Care Act will help. Findings from the Commonwealth Fund Biennial Health Insurance Survey of 2010.  
• Hafner. (2018). As Catholic Hospitals Expand, So Do Limits on Some Procedures. | Debate Prep Due  
10/30 by 11:55p  
Post-Debate Summary Due 11/5 by 11:55p |
• Ivers and Cullen. (2011). Food Insecurity: Special Considerations for Women | |
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| 10   | 11/7  | Women and Violence          | • Davidson and Golembeski. Chapter 20: Intimate Partner Violence and Women’s Health in the USA  
• Straus. (2008). Dominance and Symmetry in Partner Violence  
• Dutton et al. (2015). Coordinated Public Health Initiatives to Address Violence Against Women and Adolescents |                 |
• Bianchi and Milkie. (2010). Work and Family Research  
• Favreault. (2005). Women and Social Security |                 |
| 12   | 11/21 | No Classes – University Holiday – Thanksgiving |                                                                                                                                  |                 |
| 13   | 11/28 | LGBTQ Health                | • Mayer et al. (2008). Sexual and Gender Minority Health: What We Know and What Needs to be Done.  
• Mule et al. (2009). Promoting LGBT Health and Wellbeing through Inclusive Policy Development  
• Nguyen et al. (2018). Lesbian, Gay, and Bisexual Adults Report Continued Problems Affecting Care Despite Coverage Gains | Public Focus on Women and Health Reflection Due |
| 14   | 12/5  | Topic TBD: Student Choice    |                                                                                                                                  | Take Home Final Due |

*The course schedule may change at the instructor’s discretion.*